

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

This paper was submitted to a another journal from BMJ but declined for publication following peer review. The authors addressed the reviewers' comments and submitted the revised paper to BMJ Open. The paper was subsequently accepted for publication at BMJ Open.

(This paper received three reviews from its previous journal but only two reviewers agreed to published their review.)

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	EduCan Trial: Study protocol for a randomized controlled trial on the effectiveness of Pain Neuroscience Education after breast cancer surgery on pain-, physical-, emotional- and work-related functioning
AUTHORS	De Groef, An; Devoogdt, Nele; Van der Gucht, Elien; Dams, Lore; Bernar, Koen; Godderis, Lode; Morlion, Bart; Moloney, Niamh; Smeets, Ann; Van Wilgen, Paul; MEEUS, MIRA

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr Ina Diener Stellenbosch University, South Africa
REVIEW RETURNED	12-Aug-2018

GENERAL COMMENTS	It is not clear, but I deduct that the physical therapy to both groups id performed by the same physical therapists? I think you have a very fair control intervention to really test the efficacy of PNE combined with physical therapy
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REVIEWER	Kory Zimney University of South Dakota I have published books on PNE and receive royalties for sales. I teach PNE for a CPE company and receive honorariums for presentations.
REVIEW RETURNED	18-Sep-2018

GENERAL COMMENTS	Minor typo change on page 16 of manuscript in table 3 - central sensitisation inventory is abbreviated (SCI), change to CSI. Concern/limitation - how will you control any education of the PT providing the intensive physical therapy program and maintenance physical therapy program. They are blinded from formal education provided during intervention and control arms, so could potentially provide education different from either of these. Will they provide education as part of their normal interaction with the patient? If so how is this controlled? I applaud the authors for the pragmatic progression of the intensive physical therapy program, I'm guessing you will be tracking the actual number of visits between groups during the intensive program but did not see this listed as a secondary outcome measure.
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer: 1

Reviewer Name: Dr Ina Diener

Institution and Country: Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared': None declared

- It is not clear, but I deduct that the physical therapy to both groups id performed by the same physical therapists? I think you have a very fair control intervention to really test the efficacy of PNE combined with physical therapy

Re: The physical therapists providing the standard physical therapy program give indeed therapy in both groups but they are blinded to the allocation of treatment groups. This has been clarified in the section 'Allocation and randomization'.

Reviewer: 2

Reviewer Name: Kory Zimney

Institution and Country: University of South Dakota

Please state any competing interests or state 'None declared': I have published books on PNE and receive royalties for sales. I teach PNE for a CPE company and receive honorariums for presentations.

- Minor typo change on page 16 of manuscript in table 3 - central sensitisation inventory is abbreviated (SCI), change to CSI.

Re: they typo has been corrects.

- Concern/limitation - how will you control any education of the PT providing the intensive physical therapy program and maintenance physical therapy program. They are blinded from formal education provided during intervention and control arms, so could potentially provide education different from either of these. Will they provide education as part of their normal interaction with the patient? If so how is this controlled?

Re: This is indeed an important concern. The research team and therapist are aware of the influence of anything they say to the participants. To standardize this a communication sheet has been made for the physical therapists providing the standard physical therapy program. This document contains questions and topics that are frequently asked/discussed during the standard physical therapist together with the information the therapists can provide without influencing the educational interventions. This has been clarified in the section 'Interventions – Standard Physical Therapy program'.

- I applaud the authors for the pragmatic progression of the intensive physical therapy program, I'm guessing you will be tracking the actual number of visits between groups during the intensive program but did not see this listed as a secondary outcome measure.

Re: Indeed, number of sessions attended will be recorded. This has been added in the section 'outcomes'.